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Letter dated 16 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the pleasure to submit the report of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/127, entitled "A world against violence and violent extremism", adopted on 18 December 2013 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 16.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
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Annex to the letter dated 16 October 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General

In the Name of God, the Compassionate the Merciful

Measures taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran to boost the idea of "A world against violence and violent extremism"

In implementation of General Assembly resolution 68/127, entitled "A world against violence and violent extremism", adopted on 18 December 2013, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has the pleasure to submit the present report.

1. Concerning the threats posed by terrorist and extremist groups such as Al-Qaida, ISIL, and al-Nusra Front in the sensitive region of the Middle East, particularly Syria and Iraq, the welcoming of the idea of "A world against violence and violent extremism" (WAVE), as proposed by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Rouhani, by the Member States, as well as the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/127, are indicative of the imperative of enhancing coordination and cooperation among members of the international community in order to counter this ominous phenomenon. The fact that members of certain international and regional organizations (including the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation) welcomed the idea proposed by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and promoted in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly shows that the international community is resolved to counter terrorist and violent extremist groups.

2. Putting on its agenda the serious countering of terrorism and violent extremism at the national, regional and international levels, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always warned about the destructive consequences of such groups' activities, and it has always expressed its readiness to cooperate with members of the international community in order to launch an all-out war against such challenges.

3. Subsequent to the adoption of the said resolution (WAVE) by the General Assembly, and with regard to the widespread activities of ISIL and other extremist and terrorist groups in the region, various governmental and non-governmental bodies within the Islamic Republic of Iran have put on their agendas the implementation of the provisions of this resolution; some of the important measures taken in this regard are mentioned below.

4. For the purposes of standardization and mobilization of international capabilities to counter violence and extremism within the provisions of the above-mentioned resolution, the Foreign Ministry's Institute for Political and International Studies held the International Conference on a World Against Violence and Extremism on 10 and 11 December 2014 in Tehran, which was attended by political figures, elites and scholars from more than 50 countries. The attendees expressed their ideas about how to counter violence and extremism. In his opening speech at this conference, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Rouhani, said that the universal approval of the idea of "A world against violence and extremism" and

its adoption by consensus in the General Assembly indicated the necessity and importance of dealing with violence in the world. He further said that in order to advance the fight against violence and extremism and to promote the culture of peace and tolerance, the world needed essential, momentous initiatives, the most important of which could be as follows:

(a) The expansion and deepening of dialogues among nations, Governments and civil societies with the aim of reducing misunderstandings and conflicts to reach further cooperation and mutual understanding;

(b) Efforts to promote public training, through the use of advanced educational and training methods in order to promote the culture of peace, mutual understanding, tolerance, the importance of the role of women, youth, religious scholars, intellectuals, academics, and artists in the promotion of religious and ethical beliefs, knowledge, and emotions;

(c) The elevation of cultural, political and economic cooperation in order to accelerate the collective fight against violence and extremism.

5. In his speech, Dr. Rouhani set forth 10 proposals for the purpose of fighting against the current terrorism and extremism in the region and the world, a summary of which is set out below:

(a) To object to those countries that have contributed to the formation, organization, and financing of terrorism in the region, and also to cooperate with countries that have fallen victim to terrorism (e.g., Iraq and Syria);

(b) To indemnify the victim countries for the damages incurred and to provide them with international aid to renovate their countries;

(c) To found an international fund and create jobs in order to boost the growth of investment in countries that have fallen victim to international terrorism so as to eliminate the economic ground for the expansion of terrorism;

(d) To launch regional cooperation to modify the general education system and seminaries in order to confront takfiri extremists and violent interpretations of religious teachings and, at the same time, introduce the truth about compassionate Islam to the people of the world;

(e) To ensure cooperation among regional countries in terms of exchange of intelligence for countering terrorism;

(f) To raise public awareness by national and international media concerning the threats posed by terrorists in order to prevent them from misusing unemployed, marginalized youths;

(g) To launch international cooperation to confront the terrorists' abuse of cyberspace and social media;

(h) To boost mechanisms for controlling and countering the movement of terrorists between countries;

(i) To modify the structures of the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, which have, in some cases, proved inefficient in countering the threats against international peace and security, hence encouraging the aggressors, frustrating the victims and paving the way for violent actions;

(j) To designate 18 December (the anniversary of the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly in 2014) as the International Day of a World against Violence and Extremism, in order to commemorate the victims of this inauspicious phenomenon and to strengthen international resolve to fight violence and extremism.

6. The Islamic Republic of Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization has taken the following measures during the past two years to fulfil its duties in terms of countering violence and extremism:

(a) Holding a conference on "A world free of violence and extremism" from the Abrahamic religions point of view, attended by Iranian and American scholars;

(b) Holding a conference on Islam and Buddhism for countering violence and extremism;

(c) Holding a meeting on cooperation of religions for just peace and a world free of violence;

(d) Holding a conference of Shiite and Sunni Muslim and Christian leaders and scholars in Rome;

(e) Holding the ninth round of religious talks between Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization and the Vatican;

(f) Holding the first round of the religious meeting on the role of religious dialogue in countering violence and extremism, attended by Kenyan religious leaders;

(g) Holding the ninth round of dialogues between Islam and Christianity in order to reach common understanding;

(h) Holding the regional conference on "Dialogue between religions, development and peaceful coexistence", in Zimbabwe;

(i) Holding a conference on solutions for reaching a common understanding between Islam and Christianity, in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

(j) Holding an international scientific conference on a world free of violence and extremism, in Bosnia and Herzegovina;

(k) Holding a conference on the dialogue between religions and the role of believers in countering extremism, attended by scholars from the Harvard Divinity School;

(l) Holding an international conference on the role of Islam and Christianity in creating a world free of violence, in the Philippines;

(m) Publishing posters of the youth visual exhibit entitled "Violence against Gaza" in Ardabil, Iran;

(n) Hosting a visual exposition entitled "Peace and Islam" in the Niavaran cultural complex;

(o) Holding a meeting of "Peace and resistance", attended by artists from 23 countries;

(p) Holding an exhibition entitled "Deliverance of Gaza", with works of contemporary Iranian modernist artists, in the Visual Arts Centre;

(q) Holding an exhibition of calligraphy on the subject of peace and Islam;

(r) Hosting a joint exhibition with the United Nations about peace;

(s) Performing a theatre piece entitled "A mourning for burning books", with anti-war themes;

(t) Holding a visual exposition entitled "Writers on peace";

(u) Holding an exhibit entitled "An eye for an eye", concerning social violence against women;

(v) Playing Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 as the "Music for Peace";

(w) Inaugurating an annual orchestra programme from October 2014 to October 2015 with the slogan of world peace.

7. The International Congress on Extremist and Takfiri Currents from the Viewpoint of Islamic Scholars was organized by Ayatollah Nasser Makaarem Shirazi and a number of scholars from seminaries on 23 and 24 November 2013 in Qom, Iran. The Shiite and Sunni religious scholars from various countries attended the congress and delivered speeches on the following subjects:

(a) Countering the insurrection of takfir (i.e., excommunication) in the Islamic world;

(b) Invitation to peace, friendship, brotherhood and interaction among denominations based on wisdom, advice and amicable argument;

(c) Attempting to make Muslims aware of the heinous nature of takfiri currents;

(d) Creating a unified line and expanding grounds for Muslims' convergence against takfir or excommunication;

(e) Attempting to identify and make known the supporters and sponsors of takfiri currents in the world.

8. In the statement of the seventh religious meeting of the Centre for Dialogue among Religions, affiliated with Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization and the World Council of Churches, which was held in Tehran on 15 and 16 February 2014, the following points were emphasized:

(a) The importance of believing in an identical, common God as the essential pillar of spirituality and the key solution to principal problems of humanity;

(b) Dialogue among religions provides a vital way to the establishment of peace and security and a world free of violence and extremism;

(c) The commitment of Islam and Christianity to cooperation for the purpose of promoting peace throughout the world;

(d) Peace and friendship can be reached through paying respect for the diversity of cultures and religions and a common commitment to ethics and spirituality; also, effective dialogue can serve as an important tool to confront the words and actions of those who provoke religious hatred or intentionally try to desecrate others' sanctities;

(e) The resolution adopted by the General Assembly entitled "A world against violence and violent extremism", emphasizing the role of religious scholars in the prevention of violence and extremism, was welcomed.

9. In order to boost Islamic unity and to counter the activities of extremist, takfiri currents, the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought has taken various measures, including the following:

(a) Holding the twenty-seventh international Islamic unity conference, on the theme "The Holy Quran and its Role in the Islamic Nation's Unity";

(b) Holding the twenty-eighth international Islamic unity conference, on the theme "The United Islamic Nation: Challenges and Solutions";

(c) Holding the regional conference of unity, on the theme "The Islamic World from Takfir (excommunication) to Resistance", in Bojnoord;

(d) Holding a conference on the theme "Imamate in Islam: An Approach to Establishing a United Islamic Nation", in Kermanshah province;

(e) Holding the regional conference on the role of Islamic scholars in formation of the united community, or ummah, in West Azerbaijan province;

(f) Participation in holding the conference on the theme "The Holy Prophet: the Axis of Unity of the Islamic Ummah", in Birjand;

(g) Holding four special training courses for Shiite and Sunni teachers in Golestan, North Khorasan, Sistan and Baloochestan, and West Azerbaijan provinces;

(h) Participation in holding the conference on the theme "Hope and Security: the World Feeling the Need", attended by Sunni elites;

(i) Distribution in religious and academic centres of the book entitled "A Critical Review of Takfiri Thought".

10. In order to boost the legislative capacity of the country to counter violence and extremism, the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran has put on its agenda the codification of new provisions in the discretionary punishments bill. According to Articles 287, 288 and 289, if any individual or group attempts, through the provocative act of disseminating false information, any extremist or takfiri activities such as religious, ethnic or racial ones to the extent that it should lead to hatred of other ethnicities or races or violence against followers of other monotheistic religions, as recognized in the Constitution, such individual or group shall be punished. In addition to determining the extent of the punishment designated for these crimes, the said Articles have also specified how to identify the instances of takfiri, devious and sectarian crimes.

11. The Iranian Association for United Nations Studies, in association with the United Nations Information Centre in Tehran, the National Committee of Humanitarian Rights of the Islamic Republic of Iran Red Crescent, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross held the specialized meeting on the United Nations and the idea of a world against violence and extremism, on 19 February 2014. At this meeting, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Tehran, Ms. Yelena Plumnuck from the Prosecutor's Office of the International Criminal Court as well as a number of university professors and scholars delivered speeches on the following topics:

(a) The theoretical foundations of WAVE: peace, dialogue, and the rule of law;

(b) The importance of education in sustainable confrontation with violence and extremism;

(c) The role of the religions in countering religious violence and extremism;

(d) The prohibition of violence and extremism in international humanitarian law;

(e) Capacity assessment of the international humanitarian law system with regard to countering religious extremism and violence;

(f) The relationship between poverty and social inequality and violence and extremism;

(g) Transregional players and extremism.

12. On 22 September 2014, on the occasion of the International Day of Peace, the Iranian Association for International Studies, in association with the United Nations Information Centre, held a conference on the theme "ISIL's takfiri terrorism and threats against peace". The Head of the Iraq Headquarters in the Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Tehran and Dr. Deheshyar (a university professor) delivered speeches at this conference.

13. Attempting to exploit the scientific capacities of professors, students and researchers to promote the idea of "A world against violence and extremism" (WAVE) and the related General Assembly resolution, the International and Cultural Studies Centre of the University of Tehran held two international conferences on the theme, attended by prominent professors, elites, scholars, theoreticians, researchers and students. The first conference was held in association with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries Centre for Human Rights and Cultural Diversity on 13 October 2014. The following papers were presented at this conference:

(a) Text, hypertext, and transnational commitments related to the WAVE resolution;

(b) Peace-oriented mind in Islam;

(c) Violence and anti-violence: Islam or Muslims?;

(d) WAVE, human rights and government's international responsibility;

(e) Religious extremism in the region;

(f) The denunciation of extremism in the Holy Quran;

(g) Violence and extremism in the region;

(h) Radicalism and globalization;

(i) The development of international political violence after the Second World War;

(j) The role of regional cooperation in fighting violence and extremism.

14. The main subjects on the agenda of the second conference on a world against violence and extremism, which was held in October 2014, were as follows:

(a) The role of dialogue among religions and civilizations in fighting violence and extremism;

(b) Combating religious extremism in the region (focusing on ISIL);

(c) Technical and legal solutions to the elevation of the WAVE resolution;

(d) The role of regional and international cooperation in fighting violence and extremism;

(e) The role of education and training in fighting violence and extremism;

(f) The role of media in fighting violence and extremism;

(g) The role of culture and art in fighting violence and extremism;

(h) Terrorism, security, poverty, violence and extremism;

(i) Ethnocentrism, violence and extremism;

(j) Moderation vis-à-vis violence and extremism.

15. The first arts and culture festival on the subject of "A world against violence and extremism", with the aim of promoting the culture of peace, was held from 18 to 22 May 2014 by the International and Cultural Studies Centre of the University of Tehran, in association with the University of Tehran; the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the National Library and Archives of the Islamic Republic of Iran; and the Vice-Presidency for Women and Family Affairs; and with the participation of artists, academics and peace activists. In this conference, in addition to the involvement of various artistic fields such as painting, calligraphy, poster, photography, short film, music, and collage in the children's section, various specialized meetings were held which dealt with subjects such as the environment, globalization and the role of culture, art, media, literature, women and citizens in fighting violence and extremism. The next conference on the subject of peace is to be held with the participation of prominent artists and scholars from Iran and other countries of the world, in Tehran from 13 to 17 December 2015.

16. In May 2015, the National Library and Archives of the Islamic Republic of Iran held a conference on a world free of violence in Emam Khomeini's view, which was attended by more than 400 political, scientific and cultural figures from various countries. The conference intended to throw light on the lofty ideals of the Islamic Revolution's late leader in the arena of foreign policy, with a focus on a world free of violence. Also, the foreign headquarters of the Emam Khomeini commemoration ceremony as well as the Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini's Works contributed to the holding of this conference.

17. The attendees at the twenty-seventh International Islamic Unity Conference, which was held in December 2013, formed "A world free of violence commission" in order to emphasize the President's WAVE suggestion at the United Nations. The commission made it clear that a world without violence and a life full of peace and justice was the motto and wish of Islam.

18. The Independent Designers Society held an exposition entitled "A world free of violence" in December 2014, to promote peace and calm and to renounce any extremism. For this purpose, designers who were interested in participating in the

exposition were asked to express their own interpretation of this motto in the form of posters. A jury identified the top 10 posters of 110 received.

19. The International Conference on a World Free of Violence and Extremism was also held by Iran's cultural attaché in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in association with certain political and social institutions of that country; the conference, attended by professors, theoreticians and researchers from Serbia, Croatia and Iran, was held in the Bosniak Institute amphitheatre on 10 December 2014. The speeches revolved around the foundations of extremism, the Islamic Republic of Iran's views on violence and extremism, dialogue among religions and civilizations, the role of social and economic development in the prevention and control of environmental extremism and violence and so forth. The papers presented at the conference were published as a book in Sarajevo, as a result of efforts made by Iran's cultural attaché and the Ibn Sina Institute.

20. Iran's cultural attaché in Uganda, in association with Kampala University and the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, held the first specialized meeting on the topic "The role of religious moderation in reaching a world free of violence". The meeting was held on 16 June 2014 in the conference hall of the Inter-Religious Council of Uganda and was attended by 30 leaders, elites, academics and non-governmental organizations active in the field of religions including Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism.